

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 078365

E.O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: PFOR, LA, US

SUBJECT: CALLS BY LAO AMBASSADOR ON THE DEPUTY SECRETARY
AND ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

1. LAO AMBASSADOR KHAMPHAN PANYA CALLED ON THE DEPUTY
SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB PRIOR TO HIS
DEPARTURE APRIL 3 FOR CONSULTATION AND MEETING OF LAO
AMBASSADORS IN VIENTIANE.

2. DURING MEETINGS HE RAISED IN PARTICULAR (A) USG
POLICY TOWARD LAOS NOW AND IN EVENT CAMBODIA AND VIENTIANE
FALL TO COMMUNISM; (B) SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND VIENTIANE
AND THEIR POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON LAOS; (C) NEED FOR EARLY
REPLACEMENT FOR DEPARTING U.S. AMBASSADOR; (D) CONGRESSIONAL
ATTITUDES TOWARD AID FOR INDO-CHINA; (E) INCREASED U.S.
CONTRIBUTION TO FEOF; (F) ROLES OF SOUVANNA PHOUMA AND THE
KING; (G) VISIT TO U.S. BY KING.

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3. WITH RESPECT TO U.S. POLICY TOWARD LAOS, HE WAS ASSURED OF CONTINUED USG SUPPORT FOR VIENTIANE ACCORDS, PGNU AND ESPECIALLY SOUVANNA PHOUMA. NEITHER U.S. OFFICIAL FORESAW ANY CHANGE EVEN IF COMMUNISTS TAKE OVER SVN AND CAMBODIA. IN REPLY TO KHAMPHAN'S QUERY AS TO WHETHER THE U.S. WOULD ASSIST MILITARILY OR DIPLOMATICALLY AGAINST DRV, HABIB SAID WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN SOUVANNA'S ABILITY TO AVOID THIS AND STRESSED PROTECTION AFFORDED LAOS BY VIENTIANE ACCORDS WHICH ARE SUPPORTED BY PRC AND USSR AS WELL AS U.S. DRV PROBABLY TOO OCCUPIED ELSEWHERE TO POSE IMMINENT THREAT BUT MATTER OF CONTINUED NVA PRESENCE POSED QUESTION.

4. KHAMPHAN WAS BRIEFED ON SERIOUS SITUATIONS IN CAMBODIA AND VIET-NAM. HE ASKED IF U.S. ASSISTANCE WOULD CONTINUE SHOULD PGNU BECOME COMMUNIST AS RESULT POSSIBLE DEFEATS GKR AND GVN. HABIB REPLIED WE HOPED THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN AND DECLINED TO SPECULATE.

5. LAO AMBASSADOR WAS INSISTENT ON URGENCY OF SEEKING A REPLACEMENT FOR DEPARTING AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE. IN KHAMPPAN'S WORDS, U.S. AMBASSADOR ONLY PERSON WHO CAN ACT AS MODERATOR WITH LPF WHICH PAYS NO ATTENTION TO RIGHTISTS. WHILE HE RECOGNIZES WORTH OF PRESENT DCM, HE BELIEVES RANK AND TITLE OF AMBASSADOR MAKE CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCE. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ASSURED HIM OF AWARENESS IMPORTANCE THIS MATTER AND THAT BEST AVAILABLE PERSON WOULD BE NAMED SOON.

6. IN ANSWER TO QUESTION ABOUT CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD AID FOR INDO-CHINA AND ESPECIALLY FOR SVN AND GKR, KHAMPHAN WAS TOLD HARD TO SAY WITH CONGRESS IN RECESS. AMERICAN PEOPLE APPEARED FAVOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, FOOD, AND EVACUATION AID, BUT ATTITUDES TOWARD PROVISION OF MILITARY AID LESS FAVORABLE.

7. KHAMPHAN STATED THAT, ON INSTRUCTION FROM FONMIN, HE WAS AGAIN REQUESTING INCREASED U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO FEOF. HE WAS TOLD THIS UNLIKELY IN VIEW CUT IN OVERALL AID TO LASO AND THAT CONTRIBUTION FOR FY 75 MIGHT BE CONFIDENTIAL

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CUT. IT WAS SUGGESTED TO HIM, HOWEVER, THAT PGNU MIGHT DISCUSS WITH USAID VIENTIANE POSSIBILITY OF CUTS IN OTHER U.S. PROGRAMS AND SHIFTS TO FEOF--IF THAT WERE POSSIBLE AND LEGAL AND IF DESIRED BY PGNU.

8. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT PRIMIN WHO HAD BEEN ARCHITECT OF VIENTIANE ACCORDS, NOW LED PGNU WITH WEAKENED HAND. IF HE DIED, PGNU WOULD FACE CRITICAL SITUATION. THIS

WAS WHY LAO NOW ASKING KING TO PLAY A GREATER ROLE, I.E.,
HIS GOING TO SAM NEUA IN LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY AND HIS
STATE VISIT TO FRANCE WHERE FRENCH PRESIDENT WILL SHOW
HIS SUPPORT FOR HIM. KHAMPHAN THEN RAISED POSSIBILITY OF
A ROYAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON AFTER PARIS BUT WAS GIVEN
LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT. HE ADMITTED THIS WAS HIS IDEA AND
NOT AN OFFICIAL SUGGESTION. HE SAID HE WOULD RETURN TO
WASHINGTON IN THREE OR FOUR WEEKS. INGERSOLL

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